



# U.S. Senator Judd Gregg, Chairman

## Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions

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### **SENATE HELP COMMITTEE PASSES LEGISLATION TO PROMOTE AMERICAN HISTORY AND CIVIC EDUCATION IN THE CLASSROOM**

**WASHINGTON** – Chairman Judd Gregg (R-NH) and the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions today passed legislation to increase the focus on American history and civics in our schools. The American History and Civics Education Act of 2003 was unanimously approved by the committee this morning.

The legislation will create three specific programs to accomplish its goals. First, it will authorize the creation of twelve “Presidential Academies for Teaching of American History and Civics.” These two-week workshops, free to the K-12 teachers who participate, will increase knowledge of American history as well demonstrate creating and innovative teaching methods. The measure also establishes “Congressional Academies” for high school students to attend four-week sessions to learn about American history. Finally it creates a National Alliance of Teachers of American History to facilitate the sharing of ideas.

Senator Gregg stated, “The bipartisan support this bill received in the HELP Committee today sends a strong signal that Congress intends to address the growing ‘historical illiteracy’ problem facing our nation’s youth. As a country, we have a rich history of prosperity, as well as turmoil, and it is important that children growing up today learn from both the triumphs and failures of our predecessors. This legislation helps us to pass along an appreciation of our history and to provide a greater appreciation for the freedoms, rights and privileges we have as Americans.”

“This bill provides the resources to begin a reinvigoration of American history in our nation’s classrooms. I applaud this Committee’s tremendous commitment to the issue, and I look forward to lending my strong support on the Senate floor.”

#### **Bill Summary: S. 504, American History and Civics Education Act of 2003**

- Reestablishes the importance of American history and civics in our classrooms.
- Creates grants for Presidential Academies for K-12 teachers to strengthen their ability to teach American history and civics.
- Creates grants for Congressional Academies where outstanding high school juniors and seniors can further study American history and civics.
- Creates a national alliance for history and civics teachers to share ideas and innovations.

At today’s mark up the committee also passed:

**S. 888, Reauthorization of the Museum and Libraries Services Act**

- Provides much needed support to our museums and libraries.
- Authorizes \$250 million for libraries and \$41.5 million for museums in 2004.
- Doubles the minimum state allotment under the Grants to State Library Agencies Program up to \$680,000. Coordinates its provisions with the school library provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act

**S. 1015, The Mosquito Abatement for Safety and Health (MASH) Act**

- Provides \$100 million in local grants and research to control the mosquito population – the primary carrier of the West Nile Virus.
- Creates grants of up to \$100,000 for cities to implement mosquito control plans.
- Creates grants of up to \$10,000 for states to coordinate plans among cities.
- Instructs the NIH to conduct research on how best to control insects and vermin responsible for spreading diseases like the West Nile Virus.

**S. 686, The Poison Control Center Enhancement and Awareness Act Amendments**

- Authorizes funding for maintaining the national toll-free number to poison control centers as well as the nationwide media campaign to promote using the poison control centers.
- Standardizes the poison prevention and poison control centers
- Improves national toxic exposure surveillance.

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